



# Sunscreen for Your Sun Day



**CDC**  
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL  
AND PREVENTION

**Choose Your Cover**

## What is sunscreen?

Sunscreen filters out the sun's dangerous UV (ultraviolet) rays. These invisible rays can cause skin cancer. Some skin cancers can cause death if not found and treated early.



## Who should wear sunscreen?

People of all skin colors can get skin cancer from the sun's UV rays. Those who are most likely to get skin cancer from these rays have:

- Lighter natural skin color.
- Skin that burns, freckles, gets red easily, or becomes painful from the sun.
- Blond or red hair.
- Blue or green eyes.
- A family member who has had skin cancer.

Also, people who spend a lot of time outdoors, either for work or play, are more likely to get skin cancer from UV rays.



## Which sunscreen should I use?

Use a sunscreen with a Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of 15 or higher.

Sunscreens come in many forms, including ointments, creams, gels, lotions, wax sticks, and sprays.



Follow the directions on the package for using a sunscreen product on babies less than 6 months old. All products do not have the same ingredients; if your or your child's skin reacts badly to one product, try another one or call a doctor.

## When do I need to apply sunscreen?

The sun's UV rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes. Put sunscreen on before you go outside, even on slightly cloudy or cool days. Don't forget to put a thick layer on all parts of exposed skin. Get help for hard-to-reach places like your back.

Sunscreen wears off. Put it on again if you stay out in the sun for more than 2 hours, and after you swim or do things that make you sweat.